



# INFORMATION LINK

July 2001

A source of information for our customers

Volume 101, Issue 3

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE . . .

New ITD Web Site .....	1
State Term Cellular Phone Service	
Contract .....	2
911 Database Audit .....	3
Project Management User Group .....	4
Web User Authentication .....	5
IT Plan Updates .....	6

## New ITD Web Site

Vern Welder

The Information Technology Department (ITD) has a new web site at [discovernd.com/itd](http://discovernd.com/itd). The new site is easier to navigate and topics of interest are easier to find. The new design is a credit to ITD's e-Team. They worked very closely with several ITD customers and other ITD staff to assure that everyone's needs were met.

Site improvement is an on-going task, so we appreciate any customer feedback that helps us improve the service our site provides. Send comments to [itd@state.nd.us](mailto:itd@state.nd.us).

## Lotus Notes Development Services

Vern Welder

This is a reminder that ITD Software Development Division has professionals trained to develop custom Lotus Notes applications or to enhance packaged Lotus Notes software. We have developers currently available to start new projects. If interested, please contact Doran Eberle at (701) 328-5401 or [deberle@state.nd.us](mailto:deberle@state.nd.us) or Dennis Elhard at [delhard@state.nd.us](mailto:delhard@state.nd.us) or (701) 328-1987.

## Update for Lead IT Coordinators

Cindy Kemmet

As most of you may be aware, ITD has redesigned and given our home page a new look. The location of the Online Work Requests / IT Coordinators Database can be found at [www.state.nd.us/itd](http://www.state.nd.us/itd). Click on 'Online Service Requests/Lead Coordinator Database' on the upper left-hand side of the page.

A reminder to all lead IT coordinators to periodically review and confirm the employees you have designated as IT coordinators and other contacts for your agency. When employees leave your agency it is your responsibility to remove them from the database, which removes their access to the system. You should also review all the employees listed as various contact types to ensure the employees assigned this designation are still the appropriate employees.

The Coordinator/Contact Database is ITD's official list to ensure we are processing requests, distributing reports, and working only with authorized employees.

To check the current status of contacts in your agency, simply log into the system at the address above. Once you're successfully logged in to the Work Request System, click on the Statewide Coordinators/Contacts Search link. On the next screen, in the "Dept #" field, enter your 4 digit department number and click the "Search" button right below it. This will give you a list of all the persons you have defined for your agency. Any changes you need to make can be done through the Administration area by a lead IT coordinator for your agency.

Please contact me at (701) 328-3003 or [ckemmet@state.nd.us](mailto:ckemmet@state.nd.us) if you have any questions.

## Tax Department Receives "Application of the Year" Recognition

The forms processing application used by the Tax Department was recently recognized as an "Application of the Year" by Cardiff Software. It was one of five applications honored with the award. The application uses Cardiff's TELEform product to convert entries from Individual Income and Sales Tax forms into data that is ported to the tax applications. In addition, validations of data normally completed by temporary staff were automated.

The challenge was how to process over 300,000 income tax forms, capture the data, and provide a mechanism to handle the huge influx of paper. Binary Office, working with the Office of State Tax Commissioner and ITD staff, developed a solution allowing the Tax Department to handle the tax documents only once and to capture the data required by their S390 CICS system. In addition, the solution provided indexes and images for the new FileNet EDMS system.

The installation, a partnership between the Tax Department and ITD, will be used to process other types of tax forms in the future. The application is also available for others within state government who would like to automate their data entry processes.

More information is available at <http://binaryoffice.com/default.asp?pageid=northdakota>

## State Term Cellular Phone Service Contract Announced

A cooperative purchasing venture between the state and ND University System will result in substantial savings on cellular phone services and equipment. On March 1, the state entered into a term contract with Western Wireless Corporation, doing business as Cellular One, for cellular phone services and equipment.

This contract is a result of the collaborative efforts of the State Procurement Office, Information Technology Department, and the ND University System. In May 2000, the state and University System surveyed their agencies and institutions and learned that approximately 1,280 cellular phones were in service statewide using a total average of 161,339 minutes per month. The contract was awarded after a competitive bidding process. The state and ND University System will realize a projected monthly savings of \$5,700. The term contract features four rate plans starting at \$12.00 for 70 minutes per month.

Agencies and institutions can learn more about the cellular phone service term contract on the ND State Procurement Office website at [www.state.nd.us/csd/spo/](http://www.state.nd.us/csd/spo/) or by calling the State Procurement Office at (701) 328-2683.

## Professional Development Series For State & Local Purchasers

Dennis Klipfel

In December, the State Procurement Office announced a strategic plan for state procurement. This plan included revising state purchasing procedures,

increasing the knowledge and skills of employees conducting purchasing, and raising the delegated purchase authority of state agencies and institutions achieving levels of certification.

The State Procurement Office has collaborated with Bismarck State College to offer two introductory level courses for employees who purchase software and services. These courses are certified by the National Association of Purchasing Management, and employees can also receive continuing education points for attendance. These courses will be taught by North Dakota native, Helen M. Pohlig, Esq., formerly a corporate vice-president at the National Association of Purchasing Management (NAPM) and an expert in the field of telecommunications law and government regulations. For more information about these training opportunities, please contact BSC Corporate and Continuing Education at (701) 328-9841.

### Legal Basics of Purchasing Software.

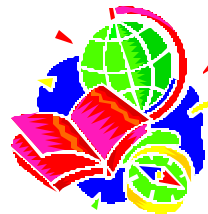
In this four-hour session, you will gain a basic understanding of the legal considerations for purchasing software by discussing the applicable laws, protection of proprietary and intellectual property rights, and indemnification. Purchasing personnel and individuals responsible for buying software and managing software licenses are

encouraged to attend. This course will be held July 2, 2001, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm at Bismarck State College with an IVN site at NDSU. The course registration fee is \$50.

### Legal Basics of Purchasing Services.

In this eight-hour session, you will be introduced to the laws relating to service contracts including the elements of a contract, contractual language, terms and conditions of a contract, and defective contracts. Project managers and others involved in the process of contracting with service providers will gain invaluable information. This course will be held August 9, 2001, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm at Bismarck State College with an IVN site at NDSU. The course registration fee is \$100.

The State Procurement Office also plans to offer a "Fundamentals of ND State Procurement Practices" course later this year. Employees attending this training will become certified to make purchases of goods and equipment above \$1,000. Allowing state agencies and institutions to purchase more goods directly will reduce the time required to obtain needed goods, and the State Procurement Office can focus on identifying and contracting for those goods that represent a significant amount of the state's budget.



## ITD EMPLOYEE PROFILE

**Name:** Dave Eckenrode

**Job Title:** Project Management Officer

**Section of ITD:** Software Development

**Job Responsibilities:** Current responsibility is overseeing project management activities on computerized systems under development by ITD's Software Development Division. These duties include leading the development of ITD's Software Development project management methodology.

**Years at ITD:** 25 years

## 911 Audit

Selina Smith

It's that time of year again – time for the 911 database audit! ITD Telecommunications is the administrator for the 911 database. The software used for this service is 911 PS/ALI (Private Switch/Automatic Location Identification), an online application from QWEST. This database is a service that is used worldwide, so the importance of being correct is crucial. Imagine this: you are working late in the State Capitol one night and suddenly experience a medical emergency. You manage to dial 9-911 on your telephone, but are unable to speak. The 911 dispatcher sees your address as 600 East Boulevard Avenue and your correct department name appears. However, the dispatcher has no idea from which part of the building, floor, or room you are calling. Valuable time is wasted trying to locate you.

For this reason, ITD's online telecommunications work request system has required fields for department, address/building, floor, and room. The information received from the telecommunications work requests populates the 911 database, and this yearly audit ensures that we are as accurate as possible. We never want to have a situation where we cannot reach an emergency on time because our database was incomplete.

ITD maintains the 911 database for state-owned telephone systems located in Bismarck, the ND State Hospital in Jamestown, and the State Developmental Center in Grafton. The 911 databases for state agencies outside the above mentioned sites are maintained by the local telephone company that provides telephone service for that city or town.

If you have been contacted by ITD to perform your annual 911 audit, please do so and return the information to ITD as requested. We appreciate your cooperation. By working together, our 911 database can be the most accurate worldwide.



## Records Management Training

Becky Lingle

ITD Records Management is offering training on a variety of records management topics on July 17-18 in the Brynhild Haugland Room.

### Day 1

Time	Session
8:15 – 9:45 am	1. Basic Records Management: Introduction & Overview ND General Retention Schedule
9:45 – 10:30 am	2. E-Mail Etiquette
Break	
10:45 am – 12:00 pm	3. Electronic Forms/Processing
Lunch	
1:15 – 2:30 pm	4. Electronic Document Management Systems
Break	
2:45 – 4:00 pm	5. Tax Department EDMS Application Overview

### Day 2

Time	Session
8:15 – 9:00 am	6. File Management
9:00 – 9:45 am	7. Forms Management
Break	
10:00 – 11:00 am	8. Electronic Records Management
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	9. Digital Signatures

### Session Descriptions:

1. Basic Records Management: Introduction & Overview
  - Establish/maintain a records management program
  - Inventory, Schedule, & Dispose of Records  
ND General Retention Schedule
  - Learn why the schedule was developed, the impact on state agencies, and how the schedule should be used
  - Discuss each record series
2. E-mail Etiquette
  - Learn the basics of e-mail
  - Proper use of e-mail
  - Learn how to manage your messages
  - Discuss e-mail as a "record"
3. Electronic Forms/Processing
  - Complete and submit forms on-line
  - Capture data from paper forms
  - Demonstrations of electronic forms
4. Electronic Document Management Systems
  - Explore the basic concepts and benefits of Electronic Document Management Systems
5. Tax Department EDMS Application Overview
  - Tour the Electronic Document Management System installed at the Tax Department through a presentation
6. File Management
  - Techniques for filing electronic and paper records
  - Compare filing equipment
  - Color-coding schemes
  - ND Subject Classification System
7. Forms Management
  - Forms analysis vs. forms design
  - Forms design standards
  - Forms coordinator responsibilities

(Continued on next page)

8. Electronic Records Management
  - Migration
  - Media life
  - Hardware/Software
9. Digital Signatures
  - Learn about the Federal E-SIGN Act and North Dakota's HB 1106, Uniform Electronic Transaction Act
  - Learn about the different technologies for electronic/digital signatures

If you are interested in attending these training sessions, please contact Becky Lingle at (701) 328-3585 or [blingle@state.nd.us](mailto:blingle@state.nd.us). Limited space is available.



## **Project Management User Group**

Rob Gall

Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to a broad range of activities in order to meet the requirements of the particular project. It is a practice that can be applied to any project regardless of size, budget, or timeline.

Due to its success, the practice of project management continues to grow at a staggering pace across the globe. The Project Management Institute (PMI), the world's leading project management professional association, now supports nearly 80,000 members worldwide and averages nearly 2,000 new members each month.

At a local level, nearly 90 state government individuals have participated in the project management course offered through Mayville State University and have received their basic certification in project management.

Successfully completing the course and passing the certification exam is a major accomplishment and milestone in developing one's project management skills. However, the course should be viewed as a beginning – not an end. Becoming an effective project manager requires continual development, it is not a practice which can be learned or mastered through one course.

Project managers have recognized the potential benefit in forming a user group where information can be exchanged and knowledge enhanced. On May 16, 2001, the first Project Management User Group meeting was held. The user group's objectives will be established by its participants. The ultimate goal will be professional development and advancement of the project management practice.

User group meetings are open to anyone with an interest in project management. The next monthly meeting is scheduled on July 24 at 11:30 am at the DCN Building, 1615 Capitol Way, Bismarck. For more information contact Rob Gall at [rgall@state.nd.us](mailto:rgall@state.nd.us) or (701) 328-1990.

## **How to Handle Offensive E-mail**

Gary J. Vetter

We've all received unwanted e-mail. Most of us have mastered the "Delete" key and can therefore tolerate their annoyance. But what about the really nasty stuff, for example, sexually explicit, racial, or hate-related material? Most people are justifiably shocked when they receive their first offensive e-mail, especially if it happens at work. Knowing the answers to a few common questions may help in dealing with the situation.

How did they get my e-mail address? E-mail addresses are not supposed to be secret, especially when they are created for the purpose of providing service to the public. Therefore, the e-mail addresses for most ND state employees are readily available on the "DiscoverND.com" web portal. In addition, e-mail addresses are gathered from newsgroups, swiped from web pages, and solicited in every imaginable fashion.

Where did it come from? When everyone plays by the rules, e-mail is inherently traceable. Unfortunately, those inclined to send offensive e-mail generally don't play fair. They use inaccurate "From" fields and relay their messages through loosely secured servers. In short, messages do not always come from where they appear and finding their true origin can be tricky.

Should I report this to someone? Occasional offensive e-mail of the anonymous nature can probably just be deleted. However, messages that target specific individuals, originate from others within state government, or become frequent in occurrence should be reported to your supervisor and to the proper authorities.



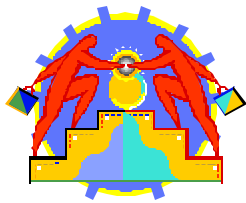
### Should I respond to the message?

Generally, this is not a good idea. Even though they often include a way to unsubscribe, it rarely works. In some cases, it only confirms that you have received their message. If you start receiving multiple e-mails from the same source, you may want to give the unsubscribe option a try. Just don't be surprised if you receive a delivery failure or if the messages continue.

### Can I block offensive e-mail?

Many of today's e-mail programs allow you to maintain an "Adult Content" group. You can also create custom rules based on subject or content. In either case, messages can be systematically moved to your "Trash" folder.

Can ITD help? ITD has the ability to block e-mail based on the originator, subject line, or content. Yet, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish offensive e-mail from legitimate conversations. In the interest of functionality, exceptions can only be made in cases that substantially impact the state's system. Requests to block e-mail should be submitted to ITD's Security Section by your IT Coordinator.



## **Medicaid/TANF Project a Success**

Vern Welder

On June 2, 2001, the North Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) implemented an enhancement to include Medicaid Eligibility in their Vision application. This Medicaid/TANF project is the largest project that ITD and any of

our customers have undertaken. The success can be attributed to a strong commitment by executive management, careful planning, strong project management, and a healthy relationship between DHS's user group and ITD's development staff.

The original vendor bid for the Medicaid/TANF project was \$10,800,000, which exceeded the budget allocated for that project. As an alternate solution, DHS requested that ITD Software Development prepare a cost/time estimate. We estimated \$5,990,000 and a 26 month timeframe. The final projected software development cost for the application is \$5,522,000, and the project was completed in 26 months. DHS user feedback on the system is positive; requirements have been met and system functionality exceeds expectations.

The project team's next tasks are to add Aged Blind and Disabled Medicaid processing to the application, web enable user interfaces, and add a new rules management (inference) engine called Brokat Advisor. These tasks are scheduled for implementation on January 2, 2002.

## **Web User Authentication**

Marlys Jangula

ITD is in the process of evaluating a solution for authenticating web users who are not within state government. After reviewing needs and possible solutions, we determined the best way to achieve this was by using LDAP (Light-weight Directory Access Protocol). A major benefit of using LDAP is the ability to have one login for a client/user that gives that person access to authorized applications, as opposed to separate id's and passwords for each application. State government employees would be authenticated against Active Directory via the LDAP protocol.

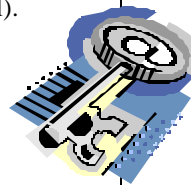
There are several LDAP solutions available. ITD wants to find the solution that best fits the state's requirements. Some of those requirements are: it must

work with Active Directory, allow easy updates, and be able to work with the software packages currently in house. After evaluating several directories, we have narrowed the choices to three options: Open LDAP, SecureWay (IBM), or NDS E-Dir (Novell Directory Services). Each solution has advantages and disadvantages. The major differences revolve around costs and ease of administration.

The Open LDAP solution is economical, due to the fact that the only costs involved are the hardware and administration of the hardware and software. However, it does not come with administration tools to easily manage directory entries. ITD would be responsible for developing programs or procedures for maintaining the directory, unless we find a solution already written by an entity willing to share it with us.

SecureWay is also economical. It is bundled with Websphere, which we currently have in house. Therefore, the costs are the same as Open LDAP. SecureWay has administration tools and ITD is in the process of evaluating the complexity of these tools. It uses a database that is much more robust than is necessary for a directory. This has the potential to cause some problems that could be avoided by using a simplified database.

The NDS solution has a GUI interface that makes maintenance much easier. The drawback with this one is the cost per directory entry. ITD would have to recover those costs by charging back to the agencies.



ITD will weigh the advantages and disadvantages and come up with the best solution for all state government. Until we have a clear answer, we are asking agencies that need a LDAP solution to assume we will be using the NDS solution. Any cost estimates ITD issues for applications that require LDAP will include NDS costs.

If you are interested in the cost structure, contact Marlys Jangula at (701) 328-3198 or [mjangula@state.nd.us](mailto:mjangula@state.nd.us).

## Agency Information Technology Plan Updates

Phil 'Boris' Miller

As part of the continuous planning cycle, now is an excellent time for state agency planners to review their agency's "A" version of the information technology plan in the online PlanIT program and bring it up to date.

Although all parts of the plan are important, the section that details Major Activities Planned requires particular attention. In this section, the 01-03 Estimated Cost should now reflect the actual total appropriated amount.

For activities that were not funded, planners should leave the activities in the plan to maintain their history, but zero-out the 01-03 blocks.

An action plan would be to consider what has changed since the budget was submitted, talk to your budget officer, think about re-prioritizing the projects, and finally, update PlanIT. Keeping your IT plan current not only fulfills the intentions of the legislature, but also places your agency in an advantageous position for the next planning cycle.



## ITD Executive Management

**Curtis Wolfe**, *Chief Information Officer*

**Mike Ressler**, *Director of Operations*

**Nancy Walz**, *Associate Director of IT Planning*

**Dan Sipes**, *Associate Director of Administrative Services*

**Vern Welder**, *Associate Director of Software Development Services*

**Dean Glatt**, *Associate Director of Computer Services*

**Jerry Fossum**, *Associate Director of Telecommunication Services*

INFORMATION LINK is published quarterly by the North Dakota Information Technology Department. Contact the editor if you are interested in contributing information or would like to be added to the mailing list.

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